

U.S. Appln. S.N. 10/578,503
AMENDMENT

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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 7-10, and amend claim 1, as shown below in the detailed listing of all claims which are, or were, in this application:

1. (Currently amended) A distribution system for transfer of components to a position for picking by a pick and place machine head, the distribution system comprising:

at least one component distributor module comprising a belt member adapted to the width of the component to be transferred; and a base portion comprising a motive means adapted to drive a belt member of the at least one component distributor module;

wherein the at least one component distributor module is adapted to be releasably fixed to the base portion, and

wherein the distribution system is provided with a retractable member, provided on the base portion and driven by a second motive means provided on the base portion, for transferring the component by the belt to a location in which the component is held from further movement until the component is picked by the pick and place head.

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2. (Previously presented) The distribution system of claim 1, further comprising releasable fixing means arranged to act between the base portion and the at least one component distributor module.

3. (Previously presented) The distribution system of claim 2, wherein the releasable fixing means comprises a male member provided on one of the base portion and the at least one component distributor module, and a female member provided on the other of the base portion and the at least one component distributor module, and a releasable locking member arranged to prevent the male and female members from disengaging from one another when locked, and further arranged to permit the female and male members to engage/disengage one another when unlocked.

4. (Previously presented) The distribution system of claim 3, wherein the male and female member are provided at one side of the said one of the base portion and the at least one component distributor module, and the releasable locking member is provided at the other side of the said one of the base portion and the at least one component distributor module.

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5. (Previously presented) The distribution system of claim 3, wherein the male member comprises a protruding member and the female member comprises a groove, the protruding member and groove arranged to provide a close fit with one another.

6. (Previously presented) The distribution system of claim 3, wherein the releasable locking member comprises a clip means provided on one of the base portion and the at least one component distributor module, wherein the clip means can be releasably secured to the said one whilst securely trapping a portion of the other of the base portion and the component distributor module.

Claims 7-10. (Canceled)